

A  
JUST REPROOF  
TO  
Mr. Richard Baxter,  
FOR HIS  
P R I D E  
AND  
INSOLENCE,  
In Calumniating that Great, and Most  
Orthodox Council  
OF  
EPHESUS, &c.

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Rom. 12. 3. *I say through the Grace given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himself more Highly than he ought to Think, but to Think Soberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the Measure of Faith.*

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1851

REPORT

OF

THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE LAND OFFICE

M<sup>R</sup> RICHARD BAXTER.

S I R,

**I**F there be any such Vice, as **PRIDE**, certainly that man must needs be guilty of it, who *Undervalues* the *Gifts*, or *Grace* of any one, whosoever he be, especially of such a one, who deserves more to be *Honor'd* than himself: How then can you escape the Censure of being a *very Proud Man*, who Slight and Disesteem the Assembly of so many *Venerable Persons*, and in a particular manner undertake to *Depreciate* the most Learned, and Pious Endeavors, and Performances of that *Admirable Man*, Saint **CYRIL**? By the *Zealous* Regard I have to the *Right Notion* of the *Two Natures*, and *ONE Person* of our Blessed **REDEEMER**, and a deep Sense of the constant Endeavors of the *Devil*, and of *Men Puff'd up* by their *Unsanctified Knowledge*, to *Pervert* our Thoughts concerning **HIM**. I am mov'd to *Indignation* against you for your most Wicked Attempt to bring an *Odium* upon the Memory of that most Reverend Bishop, who so Learnedly, so Piously, so Effectually Labor'd to deliver the Church of Christ from the *Pestilent Heresie* of *Nestorius*. That you may further perceive why I apprehend My self in a special manner concern'd to Oppose you, I shall here Recite a Passage in a small Treatise, I lately Publisht against another Enemy of the Church of England, viz. Mr. John Serjeant, *Regula Fidei* ——— *FIDEI formata Cogitat. Ulteriora de Natura Fidei Verè Christiana*, p. 26.

That what I have here Deliver'd, and that every Doctrine I ever Preacht, or Printed (having been now a *Minister of the Gospel* about Twenty years) is *True*, I am ready to Testifie with my Blood: I Appeal to your own Conscience whether you would Do the like in Defence of All the Doctrines, or Propositions you have endeavor'd to *impose* upon the World, even in your Printed Books: If not, Consider how *Vain*; and *Trifling* a person you have shown your self to be in *Publishing your own Particular Conceits*, and loose *Variable* Opinions (as *Rules*, and *Maxims*) in Matters of *Universal*, and *Eternal* Concernment. Certainly it was your most sinful **SELF-CONCEITEDNESS** that prompted you to such an Endeavor to *Defame* not only the *Council of Ephesus* and Saint *Cyril*, but also the Three other most Celebrat'd *General Councils*. I will not say your *Humor* now inclines you to Think favorably of the *Arrians* (though they surely are since of the *NONCONFORMISTS* to the Church of England) but this I shall say, that by my Zeal against *Arrianism*, and my most *Ardent* Affection to the Memory of those *Holy Bishops*, who so earnestly endeavor'd at the Council of *Nice* to Cut it off, Root, and Branch. I am induc'd to an *Abhorrence* of those words of yours, p. 267th of your Book entitl'd. *The Nonconformists Plea for Peace. Their Famous General Councils, which we justly honor for that which they did well, were shamefully Militant: Even the*

first and most honored Council at Nice, was with great difficulty kept in Peace by the Personal presence, Wisdom, and Authority of Constantine, Preaching peace to the Preachers of peace, Burning their Libels of mutual accusation, and silencing their contentious wranglings, and confining them to accord. Nazianzen's descriptions of the Ignorance and Insolence, &c. Though Constantine shew'd his Royal Prudence in owning their Libells of mutual accusation (as you speak) it does not follow from hence that there was any thing either False, or written upon a Principle of Envy, and Malice, in those Papers: that were offered him by the Orthodox Bishops. 'Tis true, they were *injust* indeed: but we defy your words in that you say they were *thamefully* Militant: The Spirit of Glory rested on them: They Fought indeed, but they Fought the Good Fight of FAITH, And did hold on *eternal* Lives. You, it seems, are one of Many, who still Fight against their *Asses*; but Consider that you shall give account to Him; that is ready to Judge the Quick, and the Dead. I pray, Sir, Remember that Nazianzen (as you call him) was a Great Bishop: And certainly the Eminency of His Virtues tends much more to the Honor of Episcopacy, then the Faults of the Bishops he speaks against could ever do to its Disreputation. It can hardly be imagin'd how there could have been such Lasting, and Glorious Monuments of His True Learning, and Godliness, if He had never enjoy'd that *Episcopal Grandeur*, against which you have so great a Spight. The Glory of His Virtues shall shine to *illuminate* the World throughout All Generations; whereas the Faults of the Bishops He speaks against can do little, or no Hurt now; unless by your, or some other mans Narration of them to Ignorant People they shall again become *scandalous*. And now, Sir, I shall mind you of those *strange* words, p. 271. Nestorius a *man of study, retirement, a poor garbe, a strict life, abhorring publick contentions, and loving quietness, but of a peevish Zeal against dissenters called Hereticks, as Enemies to the Church's unity, and peace*; so that he presently persecuted many of them, even the Novatians themselves, and stirred up the Emperor to root them all out; and by Gods just Judgment received such measure, as he had measured. Such measure, as he had measur'd, which you Contemn as proceeding from a *peevish Zeal, a Persecuting Spirit &c.* And by a plain and evident Consequence you Condemn that Great, and most Orthodox Council of EPHESUS, so highly Venerated so many Hundred Years, by All the most Profoundly Learned and most Sincerely Pious Divines (Bishops and Presbyters) throughout the Whole Christian World. I must confess you are so Favorable as not to Condemn them, as adhering to any Error; but only for want of Logick, of your Nice Faculty of making Distinctions &c. I think, say you, p. 273. You will see that the Error of Nestorius lay in his want of skill in speaking, and that one side spoke of a phrase *de abstracto*; and the other of the *Concrete*; and if so, both meant the same thing, though Cyril was judg'd to use the most skilful words.

Could none of the Council find out this, that, S. Cyrils Controversie was a meer *αἰσχυρία*? Don't you Pity these poor Ignorant men that they had not Read such Logick Books, as you have been vers'd in, that they might have attain'd to the Excellent Faculty of Distinguishing between *Abstract*, and *Concrete*? Fie, Fie! Be Asham'd of this



this *Self-Conceit*. Having said p. 275. Nestorius being thus contemn'd, Eutyches thought he would be Far enough from his Heresie, and said, that the Union of Christs Two Natures made them to be but One, you Assert in plain terms p. 283. that Cyril, Eutyches, and Dioscorus were all of one mind. Strange! that Eutyches being Startled at the Condemnation of Nestorius should Leap from his Heresie to the Contrary Extream, and yet nevertheless should Remain still in the same Mind with Him! who (say you of these Three) were all of One Mind? How would you Insult over Saint Cyril, if you could find him entangled in the like Self-contradiction? Having patcht up a great many Rags of History, you Reflect thus on the Stories you have told, the Particulars whereof I do not think it worth my pains to Examine: I have wrote this much to shew you how far the Patriarchal Seats conduced to the Churches Peace, and how far the Four First Councils of Bishops caused Christian Love, and Concord. Can those Bloody Animosities of persons most wilfully Erroneous against the Orthodox, upon supposition that they were Encreas'd by those most Solemn, and Authoritative Declarations of the Truth Concerning the PERSON of Our Saviour, by the Decrees of the Councils, Confirm'd by Princes, can, I say, those Bloody Animosities be justly Imputed to those Councils? 'Tis true, the End of their Determinations was not to Lessen the Animosities of those that will remain most willfully Erroneous against the Orthodox, for it was most Probable that they would be much heightned, and Enflam'd thereby; But it was this, that this Truth of the Greatest Importance might Shine more Clearly to All the World; so that All men, but such, who (as Job speaks) *Rebell against the Light*, may readily submit to the Power of it. How many Thousands in All Ages ever since those Councils sate have by their Determinations (as Instruments in the Hand of the GOD of Truth) been Confirm'd in the Christian Faith? I must Acknowledge my self to be in the Number of Them: And therefore I should violate the Peace of my Conscience, if I should not undertake the Vindication of those Councils against your subtle Calumnies, and Aspersions. That Self-conceit, which prompts you to flight the Labors of so many Holy Men, has entangled you in divers Erroneous Opinions which are great Impediments, if not wholly Obstrusive to True Piety. You say page 184. *Not every Parishioner (yea in our experience not one of many) hath a full Trust in Gods Mercy, and a quiet Conscience, without both which they are not to come (to the Holy Communion.)*

I shall briefly Convince you of the Weakness of this Exception. By Full we are to understand nothing else, but *Syncere*, and *Effectual* viz. Such a Trust in Gods Mercy, as makes a man to Love God, because he first loved us, which Trust chiefly arises from a lively Sense of that most Comfortable Truth contain'd in these words, *John 3. 16. For GOD so Loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son that whosoever Believeth in Him should not Perish, but have Everlasting Life.* The same Duties which are exprest by having a Full Trust in Gods Mercy are exprest in these words at the end of our Church Catechisme; *to Repent them truly of their former Sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, to have a lively Faith in Gods Mercy through Christ, with a*

*Thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all men.* Now is it possible but that he who Doth this should have a Quiet Conscience? 'Tis true, if a man conceit that he is in the Number of the *Godly* only upon account of the great Dreads, and Terrors of Conscience that he has suffer'd; and of the great Anguish he feels, or has ever felt in his Soul, arising from the Apprehensions of the Horrible Danger that his Sins, and wickedness have brought him into, and from a Sense of that *Vexation of Spirit* that is Implied in the Nature of all Sin, But in the mean time does *Habitually* Love the World, Minds Earthly things, &c. 'Tis no wonder if his Conscience be unquiet. But he that so Believes in the LORD *Jesus Christ*, as to *Set his Affection on things that are Above, not on things that are on the Earth, to Rejoyce in Tribulation, and Love his Enemies*, sincerely observing that Great Duty to Do to Every Man, as he would in the like Case that Any man should Do unto him, certainly he Feels the Power of those words of the Blessed Apostle. *Colossians 3. 15. Let the Peace of God Rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one Body, and be ye Thankful. Rom. 5. 1. 2. Therefore being Justified by Faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by Faith into this Grace, wherein we stand, and rejoyce in the Hope of the Glory of God. Galatians 5, 22. The Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace &c. 2. Thessalonians 5. 16. Rejoyce Evermore.* If you will ponder these words in your Heart, they will certainly incline you to apprehend that you have done great Disservice to the God of Love, and Peace, the Father of Mercies, and God of All Comfort, in slighting that Holy Admonition that they who come to the Holy Communion should come with a Full Trust. Page 194, *You Talk thus: The Nonconformists that think that for the main there is nothing but good contain'd in most of the Prayers of the Liturgie: yet think that they are greatly disorder'd, and defective; neither formed according to the order of matter, nor of the Lords Prayer, but like an immethodical Sermon which is unsuitable to the high Subjects, and honorable work of Holy Worship.*

Here you most *Cunningly* endeavor to *Insinuate* an Ill Opinion of the *Common Prayer*, though you dare not pretend to *Prove* that there is any Passage in it, but what is most Agreeable to the *Holy Scriptures*. Unsuitable to the high Subjects, and honorable Work of Holy Worship! The Lord rebuke you for this that *Diabolical* Calumny of those Forms of Sound Words, in the use of which so many Holy Men in so many Generations have *Offer'd up* their Hearts, a *Sacrifice* to the LORD, *Our God*. I have a long time observ'd this subtle *winding* of the *Old Serpent*, viz. that he *Insinuates* into the minds of many men a most *Injurious* Disesteem of other mens Works, only upon the account of some *Deformity* to their own *Private* Conceits, though it cannot be prov'd that they are any way contrary to the *Rules* of Fit, and Just &c. If you would declare what you mean by an *Immethodical Sermon* I should either Demonstrate that such a Sermon may be better than the best that was ever Preacht by your self, or any one of your Party: Or that our *Liturgie* is altogether unlike to that which you call an *Immethodical Sermon*. If by your *Disorder'd, and Defective* you mean

mean that there are any Expressions in the *Liturgy*, in the use of which we may not worship God in Spirit, and in Truth, we shall challenge you to shew those Expressions: if your meaning be not this, I shall plainly tell you that you are Guilty of a piece of most wicked *Sophistry*: And I trust the Lord Our God will hear the Church of England, Praying that it may please him to bring into the way of Truth all such as have Err'd, and are Deceiv'd by You, and your Schismatical Companions. What prodigious Ignorance do you discover in your Cavilling at the Sign of the Cross: page 178. Here any man may see the most Shameful Effect of your Pride, and Contempt of that Excellent Definition of a Sacrament deliver'd in our Church-Catechism. The Church Catechism (say you) defineth a Divine Sacrament thus, An outward, and visible sign of an inward, and Spiritual grace given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof. This Definition you most ridiculously, or rather most Lamentably endeavor to disprove thus: That it be Ordain'd by Christ himself is not Essential to a Sacrament of Gods making in Specie, as distinct from one that's made by Man. Pray, Sir, consider that you had said, The Church Catechism defineth a Divine Sacrament thus. Is it not Essential to a Divine Sacrament that it be Ordained by Christ himself? And is it not your own Confession that it is a Divine Sacrament which the Catechism defineth? God be Prais'd we were never so mad as to Dream of any Sacrament but what is Divine (we understand the word Sacrament in sensu Ecclesiastico) though you are so Phantastical as to talk of a Sacrament that's made by man. There may be many Outward Visible Signs of an Inward and Spiritual Grace, but that which Constitutes the Nature of a Sacrament is this, that it be Ordain'd by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same (inward, and Spiritual Grace) and a Pledge to assure us thereof. The Church does not hold that the Sign of the Cross is the means of receiving the Grace of God in any other Sense, then as every kind of Profession of Faith in Christ is the Means of Grace, viz. of Growing in Grace &c. Nor does she hold that it was Ordain'd by Christ himself in any other sense, then as Every Lawful, or Allowed Action Perform'd with an Holy Intention is Ordain'd by Christ, Our LORD, and Our God. So that the Non-conformists may cease from that Fear, which you mention page 180. The great fear of the Nonconformists is, lest this be a second Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace made by man added to Baptism.

I must declare to all the World that the thoughts of this, that I was sign'd with the Sign of the Cross immediately after I was Baptiz'd have often prompted me to such Acts of Resignation of my self, and of all my Concerns to the Will of my Crucified LORD, that I might no longer live unto my self but unto him that Dyed for me, and Rose again, that I cannot but abhor these Phanatical Wranglings against It, as proceeding from the grand Enemy of the Souls of Men. These words of the Church of England are to me Sweeter than Honey, and the Honey-Comb, we receive this Child into the Congregation of Christs Flock and do sign him with the sign of the Cross in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ Crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to continue Christs Faithful Soldier, and Servant unto his Lives end. Amen.



The Remembrance of these words Provoke me to Renew my Vows to Fight the good Fight of Faith hereupon Earth; that I may hereafter Triumph in the Kingdom of Heaven with the Captain of our Salvation: By whose Spirit, I say again, and again, I have been often mov'd upon the Remembrance of the Sign of the Cross made on my Fore-head to cry out with the Apostle: *God forbid that I should Glory, saving &c. and the world is Crucify'd to me.* These Blessed Effects of the Remembrance of being Sign'd with the Sign of the Cross which I feel in mine own Soul, have induc'd me to Believe that there are the like in the Souls of Thousands of other Men. We who in our *Preaching, or Private Instructions* use this Argument to persuade one that is Baptized to be Holy in all manner of Conversation, that the Cross of Christ may be seen on his Fore-head, that all men may plainly see that he is Crucify'd to the world, that he is such a one, as Our Saviour speaks of, *Revelations, 3. 12. I will write upon him the Name of my GOD, and the Name of the City of my GOD, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my GOD:* I say, we Accuse you before the Tribunal of your own Conscience of being highly Guilty of Disturbing the Peace betwixt us, and our People in that you endeavor to persuade them to slight that, yea to despise it, and count it a piece of *Superstition*, which we know, and feel, that it may be us'd as a strong Perswasive to the Perfection of Holiness. But here it may be said, is not this an undervaluing of Baptism, to think that a Person Baptiz'd, has need of being Mind'd of the Sign of the Cross? No surely: For it is nothing else in effect, but to be Mind'd of that most Solemn Acknowledgment made in Baptism of our Obligation to Glory in the CROSS of Christ. Oh, the Sweetness that a sincere Christian may Taste in the sense of these words! In Token that hereafter he shall not be Asham'd to confess the Faith of Christ Crucify'd, &c. I shall say no more at present but only this, that if you conceit that I shew as much Pride in the severity of the Reproof I have given you, as that, which I charge you withal, I shall entreat you to consider, that if I am Guilty of Pride in this, or in any other Way, our Mother the Church of England, calls me to the most effectual Means of being Reclaim'd, in that she commands me to Pray thus with all true Christians: *From all Blindness of Heart, from Pride, Vain Glory and Hypocrisie, from Envy, Hatred, and Malice, and all Uncharitableness, Good Lord Deliver us.*

Farewell, I take my leave of you with this Request, that, to Calm your Spirit, you would presently Meditate on these words: *Revelation 22.20. He which testifieth these things, saith, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, COME LORD JESUS.*

F I N I S.